

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Cancel claims 4 and 5 without prejudice, amend claims 1, 3 and 10 and add new claims 11-14 as shown below:

1. (Currently Amended) An exhaust gas purification filter comprising a honeycombed structure having a multiplicity of cells surrounded by partitioning walls for trapping the particulates contained in the exhaust gas,

wherein, before the amount of the particulates deposited in said exhaust gas purification filter reaches a predetermined value, the pressure loss caused by the passage of the exhaust gas is increased with the increase in the deposited amount of particulates, and after the deposited amount of the particulates exceeds the predetermined value, the pressure loss is not substantially increased.

2. (Original) An exhaust gas purification filter according to claim 1, wherein said predetermined amount of the particulates deposited is smaller than the amount which makes the partitioning walls melt due to the heat generated when burning the deposited particulates.

3. (Currently Amended) An exhaust gas purification filter of a honeycombed structure having a multiplicity of cells surrounded by partitioning walls,

wherein at least some of the cells each have a plug at one of the end portions thereof,

wherein at least some of the plugs to be arranged on the downstream side of the honeycombed structure in the fluid path are partial plugs each ~~have~~having an opening allowing the fluid to pass therethrough, and

wherein the pressure loss caused when the fluid entering the cells passes through the partitioning walls is smaller than the pressure loss caused when the fluid passes through the partial plugs;

wherein each of the end surfaces of the exhaust gas purification filter includes an alternate arrangement of the cell end portions each having a plug and the cell end portions each having no plug; and

wherein all the plugs located on the upstream side of the honeycombed structure are full-fledged plugs capable of blocking the passage of the fluid entirely.

Claim 4 - cancelled.

Claim 5 - cancelled.

6. (Original) An exhaust gas purification filter according to claim 3, wherein the filling rate of said partial plugs is in the range of 5 to 80 % in terms of $((A - B)/A) \times 100$, where B is the area of the opening of each partial plug and B~~A~~ is the area of the cell opening.

7. (Original) An exhaust gas purification filter according to claim 3,

wherein the plugs located at the central portion of the downstream end surface of the exhaust gas purification filter are partial plugs, and the plugs located around the partial plugs are complete plugs for completely blocking the passage of the fluid.

8. (Original) An exhaust gas purification filter according to claim 3, wherein all the plugs located on the downstream end surface of said exhaust gas purification filter are the partial plugs.

9. (Original) An exhaust gas purification filter according to claim 3, wherein the partial plugs represent at least 30 % of all the plugs located on the downstream end surface of said exhaust gas purification filter.

10. (Currently Amended) An exhaust gas purification filter ~~according to claim 3,~~

of a honeycombed structure having a multiplicity of cells surrounded by partitioning walls,

wherein at least some of the cells each having a plug at one of the end portions thereof,

wherein at least some of the plugs to be arranged on the downstream side of the honeycombed structure in the fluid path are partial plugs each having an opening allowing the fluid to pass therethrough,

wherein the pressure loss caused when the fluid entering the cells passes through the partitioning walls is smaller than the pressure loss caused when the fluid passes through the partial plugs; and

wherein that area of the downstream end surface of said exhaust gas purification filter which is located within a curved line connecting the middle points of the lines connecting the center and the outer periphery of the downstream end surface is defined as a central area, and the area located outside the particular curved line is defined as a outer peripheral area, and

wherein the partial plugs represent a higher percentage of the plugs in the central area than in the outer peripheral area.

11. (New) An exhaust gas purification filter according to claim 1 wherein the exhaust gas purification filter is made of ceramic.

12. (New) An exhaust gas purification filter comprising:

a honeycombed structure having a multiplicity of cells surrounded by partitioning walls thereby defining longitudinal passages from an upstream to a downstream end of said structure;

solid complete plugs being disposed in the upstream end of a first subset of said passages so as to prevent direct gas flow into the upstream ends of said first set of passages; and

plugs also being disposed in the downstream end of the remaining subset of said passages wherein at least a substantial portion of the plugs in said remaining subset of passages are partially open plugs such that the pressure drop experienced by gas flowing through the filter from the upstream end to the downstream end is limited even in the presence of excessive particulate deposits along said passages.

13. (New) An exhaust gas purification filter as in claim 12 wherein said structure is made of ceramic.

14. (New) An exhaust gas purification filter as in claim 12 wherein the partial plugs have an effectively plugged area in the range of 5% to 80% in terms of $((A-B)/A) \times 100$ where B is the area of the opening in the partial plug and A is the cross-sectional area of the passage being partially plugged.